

Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached sheet of drawings includes changes to Figs. 4, 5, 6 and 7 and replaces the original sheet also including Figs. 4, 5, 6 and 7. The amendments are explained in detail in the Remarks.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This paper is in response to the Office Action mailed October 18, 2007.

Claims 1-20 are pending in the application.

In the drawings, Figs. 4, 5, 6 and 7 have been amended to address the Examiner's comments in the pending Office Action. Fig. 4 has been amended to change reference character 236, previously used to indicate the location of attachment of flap 230 to the underside 120 of sheet 101, to new reference character 237. This amendment will avoid confusion with the use of reference character 236 in Fig. 5 to indicate a planting space. Fig. 6 has been amended by adding reference character 237 with a broken lead line to denominate the dashed line shown on flap 240, similarly indicating the location of attachment of flap 240 to the underside 120 of sheet 101.

In Figs. 4 and 5, a flap is shown that forms a tube when folded over. This element was previously denominated only by reference character 230, which was used in the specification both when referring to the element as a flap, and when referring to it as a tube. Reference character 231 has been added to Figs. 4 and 5 so that it may be used in the specification when referring to the associated element as a tube. Similarly, in Figs. 6 and 7, the element identified by reference character 240 was referred to in the specification as a flap and also as a tube when folded over, the same reference character 240 being used in both instances. Figs. 6 and 7 have been amended to add the reference character 241 for use in the specification when identifying the associated element as a tube.

In the specification, paragraphs [0040], [0062] and [0063] have been amended to address the Examiner's comments in the pending Office Action. Reference characters 102, 104, 106 and 108, shown in reference to the edges of sheet 101 in Fig. 2, have been added to the text of paragraph [0049]. Where reference character 230 was used in paragraph [0062] when referring to a tube formed from a flap it has been replaced with reference character 231. Reference character 241 has been added to paragraph [0063] to denominate a tube formed from flap 240.

In the claims, Claim 1, 12, 16, and 20 have been amended to overcome the prior art cited by the Examiner in the pending Office Action. Claims 1, 16 and 20 are independent claims. Claim 12 depends from Claim 1. The remaining claims depend from independent claims 1 or 16.

Claim 1 has been amended to include limitations specific to a novel attachment means, namely, formation of tubes from flaps cut out of the sheet and folded back upon the underside of the sheet to hold a fluid-permeable hose adjacent to the opening. The tubes utilize material already cut to form openings in the sheet for garden plants and by virtue of their location advantageously hold the hose so that water or other fluid is applied directly at the opening and in close proximity to the garden plant therein. In addition, the hose provides weight at the opening to hold it against the ground. This conserves water from evaporation and helps keep the sheet from billowing when wind blows across the sheet. These improvements are novel and provide a great advantage to the user. In addition, Claim 1 has been amended to include the limitation that the means

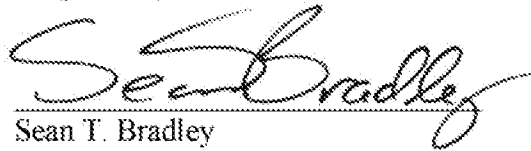
for weighting the edges of the sheet substantially conforms the edges to the surface of the ground. This limitation avoids the ground cover disclosed in Baird (patent No. 5,709,049), which is disclosed as comprising the sidewalls of a used tire. While presumably providing certain advantages, this material will necessarily have a certain stiffness, particularly when, as disclosed, it has an L-shaped cross section. A ground cover formed with such material at the perimeter and sheet material stretched across will (a) not allow the sheet material to rest against the ground but will substantially hold the sheet material off the ground, and (b) impart such structural rigidity that the ground cover cannot conform to the surface of the ground but, rather, will bridge irregularities in the ground surface. Due to the amendments to Claim 1 adding new limitations, it is now in condition for allowance. Claims 2 through 15 are in condition for allowance as they depend from Claim 1.

Claim 16 has been amended to add the limitation that the water-permeable tube is attached adjacent an edge of the opening. Baird, DiGrassi and Odenkirk all disclose hoses or fluid reservoirs that are located at the periphery of the disclosed devices. Claim 16 and depending Claims 17 through 19 are in condition for allowance.

Claim 20 has been amended to recite limitations similar to those discussed above. In particular, the prior art does not disclose attaching a fluid-permeable conduit to the underside of the sheet so that it is adjacent to the opening and can thereby deliver fluid directly to the ground at the opening and weight the sheet at the opening, further helping retain the sheet in position upon the ground.

In view of the above amendments it is respectfully requested that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. In the event that the Examiner is of the opinion that the prosecution of this application can be advanced thereby, she is invited to contact Applicant's attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Sean T. Bradley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Sean" and last name "Bradley" clearly distinguishable.

Sean T. Bradley
P.O. Reg. No. 46,572

Erickson & Kleypas, L.L.C.
800 W. 47th Street, Suite 401
Kansas City, Missouri 64112
Phone: (816) 753-6777

Attorneys for the Applicant